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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 65th MEETING

Chairman: Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria)
(Vice-Chairman)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

CONTENTS

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF TURGUT ÖZAL, PRESIDENT OF TURKEY

AGENDA ITEM 17: APPOINTMENTS TO FILL VACANCIES IN SUBSIDIARY ORGANS AND OTHER APPOINTMENTS (continued)

(j) Appointment of members and alternate members of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee

AGENDA ITEM 104: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993 (continued)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/47/L.56 concerning agenda item 22

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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF TURGUT ÖZAL, PRESIDENT OF TURKEY

1. The CHAIRMAN, speaking on behalf of the Committee, paid tribute to the memory of the Turgut Özal.

2. At the invitation of the Chairman, the members of the Committee observed a minute of silence.

AGENDA ITEM 17: APPOINTMENTS TO FILL VACANCIES IN SUBSIDIARY ORGANS AND OTHER APPOINTMENTS (continued)

(j) Appointment of members and alternate members of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee (A/47/907 and Add.1)

3. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to the note by the Secretary-General in documents A/47/907 and Add.1. The Secretary-General informed the General Assembly of the nomination by the Government of Tunisia of Mr. Tarak Ben Hamida to fill the unexpired portion of the term of office of Mr. Belhaj, who had resigned as an alternate member of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee.

4. She would take it that the Committee wished to recommend, by acclamation, to the General Assembly the appointment of Mr. Ben Hamida as an alternate member of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee for a term of office beginning on the date the General Assembly approved the appointment and ending on 31 December 1994.

5. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 104: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993 (continued)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/47/L.56 on agenda item 22 (A/47/7/Add.17 and A/C.5/47/93)

6. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the report of the Advisory Committee (A/47/7/Add.17), said that, following its consideration of the Secretary-General's statement of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/47/L.56 (A/C.5/47/93), the Advisory Committee had exchanged views with the representatives of the Secretary-General on issues related to the statement. The Advisory Committee's report contained a number of observations concerning those discussions.

7. The Secretary-General indicated in his statement that the requirements for the mission to Haiti in 1993 would amount to $23,694,900 and that he did not propose that Member States be assessed for additional amounts. The budgetary implications might be changed, however, as a result of the current negotiations between the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS) concerning their respective shares of the mission's expenses under the various elements of expenditure.

8. Since assessment of the relevant amounts was not necessary at the current state, the Advisory Committee believed that the Secretary-General should be

(Mr. Mselle)

authorized to enter into further commitments of up to $18.1 million, pending a more detailed review in September 1993 of all aspects of the operation. The results of the negotiations with OAS on cost sharing would also be known at that time, and it should then be possible to determine the exact amount for which Member States would be assessed. Under those circumstances, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Secretary-General should be allowed the full commitment authority requested, subject to the conditions stated in its report.

9. Mr. INOMATA (Japan) said that his Government would welcome United Nations participation in the proposed international civilian mission to Haiti, in conjunction with OAS. Furthermore, Japan was prepared to make a voluntary contribution in cash of $1 million as an outright grant to the Trust fund for Haiti, on the understanding that the voluntary contributions made to the Trust Fund would be used to meet the expenses of the mission and be reflected as savings against the necessary amounts to be appropriated and assessed in accordance with the observations and recommendations of the Advisory Committee contained in paragraph 11 of its report (A/47/7 Add.17).

10. In addition, Japan would make available $1.5 million to meet the start-up requirements of the mission, utilizing part of the grant cash contributions which it had recently made to a United Nations general trust fund for common support services.

11. His delegation suggested that the Committee recommend to the Assembly that it should approve the Advisory Committee's observations and recommendations that it should authorize the Secretary-General to enter into further commitments of up to $18.1 million; that it should invite the Secretary-General to intensify efforts to solicit voluntary contributions and that it should urge Member States to respond to his efforts in order to help meet costs related to the mission and to ensure the necessary cash flow pending the assessment of the relevant amount.

12. Mr. BAHADIAN (Brazil) said that Brazil was fully committed to the promotion of democracy and human rights in Haiti and to the restoration of that country's legitimate Government. It therefore welcomed draft resolution A/47/L.56, on the participation of the United Nations in the proposed international civilian mission to Haiti, which was fully consistent with the need to revitalize the General Assembly, especially in respect of activities of an extraordinary nature, as recognized by the Secretary-General in his statement of programme budget implications (A/C.5/47/93, para. 17). Furthermore, the resolution pointed the way to a more purposeful form of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, which could serve as a useful model for implementation in other conflict areas in the world.

13. His delegation concurred with the Advisory Committee's observations and recommendations and hoped that all Member States, particularly those in a strong financial position, would contribute to the Trust Fund for Haiti established by the Secretary-General.

14. Mr. OSELLA (Argentina) said that he shared the view just expressed by the representatives of Japan and Brazil that the international civilian mission to Haiti was important to the United Nations and should be launched without delay, since the fate of the people of Haiti as well as universally endorsed democratic values were at stake.

(Mr. Osella, Argentina)

15. Since it was not possible at the current stage to calculate the exact funding requirements for the mission, his delegation supported the Advisory Committee's recommendations (A/47/7/Add.17, para. 11) that the Secretary-General should be authorized to enter into further commitments of up to $18.1 million. It looked forward to the Secretary-General's report on the expanded operational plan.

16. Mr. MERIFIELD (Canada) said that his delegation supported the action of the United Nations aimed at resolving the situation in Haiti. Such initiatives should in future constitute, where appropriate, one of the principal activities of the Organization.

17. While it welcomed the endorsement by the Advisory Committee of the request by the Secretary-General and looked forward to a comprehensive report in September 1993 on the actual cost of the mission, his delegation would have been prepared at the current stage to endorse the recommendation of the Secretary-General for the formal appropriation of the amount requested. That amount represented an extraordinary expense and as such should be dealt with outside the procedures related to the Contingency Fund.

18. Ms. SHENWICK (United States of America) said that her delegation strongly supported the Secretary-General's proposals. The mission in Haiti should be funded from the regular budget of the Organization not only to ensure its viability, but also because of the implications for future funding of activities from the regular budget. The Organization's regular budget must be flexible enough to accommodate the changing needs and priorities of the international community and must represent the diverse spread of the interests of its Members. The operation in Haiti was important to the United States because of the particular mandate of the mission and because it demonstrated the growing importance which the Organization attached to peace-building activities, as opposed to the often burdensome responsibilities of peace-keeping.

19. She noted that the Advisory Committee had had no technical objections to the Secretary-General's request and therefore considered that the request should be approved by the Fifth Committee at its current session.

20. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, based on the programme budget implications submitted by the Secretary-General, and on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution contained in document A/47/L.56, the Secretary-General would be authorized to enter into further commitments of up to $18.1 million; the appropriation for the year 1993 and the related assessment would be determined in the light of a report of the Secretary-General to be presented to the General Assembly in September 1993.

21. Ms. SHENWICK (United States of America) said that a commitment authority alone was not sufficient for the operation in question. If the Committee could not resolve the matter at the current time, she would suggest that the meeting be adjourned and the issue discussed in informal consultations.

22. Mr. INOMATA (Japan) said that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it approve the recommendation of the Advisory Committee to authorize the Secretary-General to enter into further commitments of up to $18.1 million. The General Assembly should also be invited to urge the

(Mr. Inomata, Japan)

Secretary-General to intensify his efforts to collect voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund and to ensure the necessary cash flow, pending the final assessment of contributions.

The meeting was suspended at 11.10 a.m. and resumed at 12.50 p.m.

23. The CHAIRMAN said that in the informal consultations just held a consensus had been reached on a decision. She therefore suggested that, on the basis of the statement of programme budget implications submitted by the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee's recommendations, the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/47/L.56, expenditures amounting up to $19,112,600 might arise and the Assembly would be required to authorize the Secretary-General to enter into further commitments not exceeding $18.1 million. As an exceptional measure, actual regular budget requirements for 1993 and any additional assessment for the regular budget for the biennium 1992-1993 would be considered in the light of the report to be submitted by the Secretary-General to the Assembly in September 1993. In addition, the Trust Fund for Haiti would be administered in accordance with the recommendations and observations made by the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee and Member States would be invited to respond positively to the Secretary-General's appeal for voluntary contributions.

24. She would take it that the Committee wished to inform the Assembly accordingly.

25. It was so decided.

26. Mr. STITT (United Kingdom) said that his delegation welcomed the Committee's decision as it represented the most sensible approach in a context of considerable uncertainty over the exact financial needs of the mission. The Secretary-General's performance report on the mission scheduled for September would enable the Organization to take more definitive decisions on financing, and his delegation assumed that there would be no need for additional appropriations under the regular budget during the current biennium, since the need for such appropriations would only become clear in the light of the mission's progress during its first four months.

27. Mr. INOMATA (Japan) said that his delegation was concerned by the failure of the General Assembly, on occasions in the past, to take action on recommendations made by the Fifth Committee. As the Committee was a body of the General Assembly, its recommendations should be acted on by the Assembly. He hoped, therefore, that the appropriate steps would be taken to avoid such omissions in the future.

28. The CHAIRMAN said that the Secretary of the Committee and the Rapporteur had taken note of the concerns expressed by Japan.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.